

Department of Commerce Growth Management Services Planner's Update

A monthly newsletter to share helpful information related to planning in Washington State

DECEMBER 2011 – ISSUE 51

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www.commerce.wa.gov/growth

www.washington-apa.org

www.smartgrowth.org

www.planningpaw.org

www.mrsc.org

Welcome to the Planner's Update, an electronic newsletter from the Department of Commerce, Growth Management Services. We send this newsletter monthly to share helpful information related to planning in Washington State.

Please feel free to send us any comments or ideas for how to make this newsletter more useful. You can also use the link below to provide additional names of planners who might like to subscribe.

Please also consider sharing this newsletter with planning commissioners.



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1. GMA Periodic Update Guidance

Growth Management Services has revised its periodic update guidebook, “*Keeping Your Comprehensive Plan & Development Regulations Current: A Guide to the Periodic Update Process under the Growth Management Act*”. The revised guidebook addresses legislation from the 2011 session, such as revised periodic update deadlines and the extended time between required updates from every seven to every eight years. Additional updates to the guide address early adoption, annual amendments, and phased review. To view the guide, or

for additional resources regarding the update process, please visit the [Growth Management Act Periodic Update](#) webpage.

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2. State Energy Strategy Issued by Commerce

Commerce officially released the [2012 Washington State Energy Strategy](#). The report is the culmination of almost two years of work by Commerce with the assistance of our Advisory and Technical Experts committees as well as the Depts. of Transportation, Ecology, and the UTC and many other state agencies. This is the first comprehensive update of Washington's energy strategy since 1993.

- Transportation efficiency is the primary focus of the strategy, with additional emphasis on building energy efficiency in and distributed energy systems. The transportation section includes recommendations in three major areas: vehicle and fuel efficiency, travel efficiency through land use and trip reduction, and analysis of transportation pricing impacts on energy use.
- The buildings recommendation focuses on improved disclosure of energy use to businesses and homeowners, and financing and implementation support for energy retrofits and low income weatherization.
- The distributed energy section offers recommendations on streamlining permitting and regulation of small energy systems, and rationalizing our current energy incentives.

Throughout the development of the strategy, Commerce worked on evaluation and balancing the three statutory goals of the process: maintaining competitive energy prices, building our clean energy economy and jobs, and meeting our greenhouse gas reduction targets.

For more information: Tony Usibelli, Director, WA State Energy Office, 360.725.3110

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3. New Guide for Planning Near Natural Gas Pipelines

The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration recently initiated an effort to address land use encroachment on pipeline rights-of-way. Their purpose was to develop recommended practices that local governments can use to address issues of land development near pipelines. A stakeholder group, named the Pipeline and Informed Planning Alliance (PIPA), issued a report entitled *Partnering to Further Enhance Pipeline Safety in Communities Through Risk-Informed Land Use Planning*.

One of the key concepts in the report is establishment of a consultation zone – an area within a specified distance of a pipeline that warrants additional communication between the pipeline operator and the developer. The report encourages local governments to adopt planning ordinances that require a developer within a consultation zone to review their plans with the pipeline operator before a permit is issued by the local government.

A key to this concept is having comprehensive knowledge of where transmission pipelines are located in your community. The National Pipeline Mapping System (NPMS) contains information on all transmission pipelines in the country (see www.npms.phmsa.dot.gov). Once transmission pipelines are identified, the local government can then contact the

operators to discuss the system and establish an appropriate consultation zone based on the facts and circumstances pertinent to the facilities in their area. The PIPA report can be viewed at: pipa-info.com.

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